

Counselor's Corner: January 2022 – Celebrate Your Success

It's a new year! Time for a fresh start. Get ready for new goals, resolutions, intentions, and vision boards. But, before you do that... slow down a little. Let's not forget to celebrate your success.

Take time to look back at last year. How did you do? What worked really well, and what areas could use some more attention? Before assigning yourself new goals for 2022 it's important to reflect and celebrate all that you have achieved. And let's be honest... you survived another year of pandemic life. That's a big accomplishment. CELEBRATE! Give yourself some credit. This hasn't been easy.

Celebrating your success is good for your mental health. When we celebrate, our brains release the feel-good chemical called dopamine. Dopamine shows up in our lives around activities associated with motivation and reward. It can also help us with focus, memory, and sleep regulation.

It may be helpful to look at your larger goals in parts. Instead of waiting until you've accomplished the entire goal, break it down and celebrate at each level. Those small steps are important in achieving the greater goal – don't overlook them. Sometimes, it's just the boost you need to keep going.

When we succeed, we are inclined to want more of that success. So, we can learn from what went well and incorporate that into future plans and goals.

While you're reflecting on last year, be intentional and deliberate in your efforts to look for the positives! Unfortunately, it's just human nature to look around and easily identify the negative things in life. It's the way our brains are wired. However, we tend to experience more of whatever we focus on. So, if we're only looking at the negative – that is all we'll continue to see. Therefore, we need to challenge ourselves to seek out the positives. You'll be pleasantly surprised at just how much there is to celebrate when you really stop and look for it.

I would encourage you to create a "Celebration List" of all of the great things you accomplished in 2021. This may be helpful to look back at when you need a little encouragement or want to kick your motivation up a notch for the current year.

"Remember to celebrate milestones as you prepare for the road ahead." – Nelson Mandela

